

STORMWATER MATTERS

*A Newsletter for MS4 Communities
in Northwest Indiana*



Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

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What is an MS4 Community?

An MS4, or Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System, is comprised of drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, man-made channels or storm drains owned or operated by a state, city, town, borough, county, parish, district, association or other public body. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) storm water Phase II final rule requires permit coverage for storm water discharges from MS4s, primarily those located in urbanized areas. This permit program affects forty communities in Northwest Indiana and is administered by Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). IDEM has established a new rule, Rule 13, establishing criteria for storm

water discharges associated with MS4 storm water conveyance systems.

The reason these rules have been established is because, despite the passage of the Clean Water Act, 40% of surveyed US water bodies are still impaired by pollution and do not meet water quality standards, according to the 1996 National Water Quality Inventory. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers pollution from all diffuse sources, including sediment from construction sites, urban storm water pollution and agricultural runoff, to be the most important sources of contamination in the nation's waters. The problem of polluted storm water runoff has two main components: increased volume and rate of runoff from impervious

surfaces and the concentration of pollutants in the runoff. Both components are directly related to development in urban and urbanizing areas. When impervious cover reaches between 10 and 20 percent of the area of a watershed, ecological stress becomes clearly apparent.

Because of the magnitude of fiscal and environmental impacts the EPA mandated Phase II storm water rules have on our region's MS4 communities, NIRPC has developed a public education and participation program to assist local MS4 communities in meeting some requirements of the rule. Twenty-three entities in northwest Indiana are currently part of the Northwest Indiana MS4 Community Partnership—members are listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Urban Development

Urban development has a profound impact on the quality of streams, rivers and lakes. Initial clearing and grading of a site alters its hydrology. Removal of vegetation and natural depressions, as well as soil disturbance and compaction, contribute to destruction of a site's natural water storage capacity. As a result, rainfall on the site is rapidly converted into storm water runoff, carrying sedi-

ment, toxic materials, construction and other debris into our waters. When construction is complete, things can go from bad to worse. Impervious surfaces like roof tops, roads, parking lots and driveways no longer allow the rainfall to soak into the ground. The resulting increase in runoff can easily overwhelm existing drainage systems resulting from "improvements" to the natural system such as curb

and gutters, enclosed storm sewers or lined channels designed to speed removal of the runoff. This means that more untreated runoff gets into our waterways even faster, increasing the amounts of pollutants responsible for the degradation of our waters. By minimizing the amount of contaminants in the runoff and slowing its movement, we can have a tremendous impact on water quality.



Runoff into Lake Michigan



Hey, Kids!!!

WATER QUALITY POSTER CONTEST!



The MS4 Community Partnership is sponsoring a poster contest this spring, open to elementary and middle school students in Lake and Porter County.

The theme of the contest is “choices we can make to help improve water quality in our lakes and streams”. Students are challenged to creatively illustrate water pollution solutions that will help keep our water clean! Students are encouraged to include an original slogan on their posters.

All entries must be received by May 15, 2007– send entries to NIRPC, c/o Mary Beth Wiseman, 6100 Southport Road, Portage IN 46368. Four winners in each of three categories (K-2, 3-5 and 6-8) will be selected by June 1.

Poster size: 12” X 18”, landscape orientation. The student’s name, school, grade, and teacher’s name and phone number must be written on the back of the poster.

Winning entries will be featured in a 2008 calendar to be printed and distributed regionally. Posters submitted may be used for educational purposes and become the property of the MS4 Community Partnership and cannot be returned.

For more information, contact Mary Beth Wiseman at (219) 763-6060, mwiseman@nirpc.org.

Flyers will be distributed to community schools!

**One Inch
of Rainfall
on 1000 sq
ft of roof
=
623 gallons
of
storm water
runoff!**

Lake Michigan Districts Household Waste Collection Program

2007 MS4 Community Collection Dates

*Saturday collection times 9am –2 pm

**Friday collection times 1pm—6 pm

April 28* Cedar Lake Town Hall
May 11** Gary IUN
June 02* Griffith Public Works
June 30* Hobart City Barns
July 14* Chesterton Westchester IS
Aug 03** St John Lake Central HS
Aug 18 * Portage HS
Sept 8 * Lake County Fairgrounds
Sept 22* Highland Public Works
Oct 20* Valpo Expo Center
Oct 27 Munster Town Hall

Dates in red include the gas can exchange program. Exchange your old gas can for a new, environmentally friendly 2.5 gallon CARB gas can.

Limit: one new can per family.

What can I dispose of?

Aerosols

Automotive Supplies: antifreeze, oils and other fluids

Batteries: automotive and household

Corrosives

Mercury Containing Products: fluorescent tubes, thermometers– silver bulbs, thermostats, etc

Paint and Related Products: oil based paints, thinners, solvents

Pesticides: fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, etc

Waste Fuels: diesel, gasoline, kerosene, other flammable liquids

What is not accepted?

Ammunition and Explosives: contact your local fire department for disposal

Commercial Hazardous Waste

Latex Paint: remove lid from latex paint cans, allow to dry completely and dispose of with regular garbage.

Call 1-800-946-4449 for more information.



Best Management Practices for Homeowners

Garden With Care!

Fertilize with care. Select low-phosphorus (P) lawn fertilizers, do not apply near water bodies or storm drains, and sweep excess fertilizer back onto your lawn. Avoid application of lawn care chemicals before heavy rains. Allow grass to go dormant during periods of drought. Mow less frequently—longer grass has deeper roots and needs less water.

Consider using native plants, they need far less water and chemicals to flourish in your garden. Install a rain garden or

an old-fashioned rain barrel to collect excess rainwater. This water can be used to water during dry spells. Mulching helps retain water, control weeds and pests.

Take Care of your Car!

Take good care of your car—fix any leaks promptly, and dispose of used oil and other fluids properly. Wash your car on the lawn, or take it to the car wash.

Pick up after your pet!

Not only is it the considerate thing to do, it also keeps harmful bacteria out of our water

supply. Dispose of the waste in the toilet or the trash.

Dispose of Waste Properly!

Instead of dumping unwanted products at home, transport them to a local hazardous waste center or collection day in your community. Contact your community for disposal locations and guidelines.

Sweep it up!

Use a broom instead of your hose to clean debris off sidewalks and driveways. Sweep dirt back onto the lawn.

Construction

Site Basics:

1. Limit the extent and duration of land disturbance.

2. Divert incoming flows and impede internal flows.

3. Install sediment capturing devices to retain sediment picked up on the project site.



Construction Rules for MS4 Communities

MS4 communities are required to develop, implement and enforce stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPP) to reduce pollutants in storm water runoff to their MS4 from construction activities that result in land disturbance of greater than or equal to one acre. The local Soil and Water Conservation District will provide recommendations to MS4s on individual construction projects. Construction plans must be submitted to the

proper authority for review and approval.

Suggestions to help with meeting requirements include establishing ordinances requiring appropriate erosion and sediment controls and control of other wastes with the local enforcement agency. Also, establish procedures for site plan review that consider potential water quality impacts to help with compliance and enforcement efforts. Conduct-

ing local site compliance inspections ensures that BMPs are properly installed, and provides an opportunity to provide guidance, issue warnings or assess penalties. Provide the public with the information necessary to allow identification of instances of non-compliance in the community.

Good planning and installation of BMPs targeting each stage of the erosion process can provide successful control of



Public Participation and Involvement

Public input is invaluable to the success of any MS4 program. An active and involved community allows for broader public support and expertise, and helps to build relationships within the community.

Provide opportunities for the public to participate in the development and implementation of community storm water management programs. Hold public

meetings and establish citizen advisory panels, encouraging all members of the community to participate. Contact local schools about student volunteer opportunities.

Community cleanup days, tree plantings, rain gardens, and storm drain marking projects are all valuable community efforts. Coastal Week is a great time to hold events that will help

your community become an active part of the program.



Helpful websites:

Stormwater Manager's Resource Center

www.stormwatercenter.net

Rain Gardens

www.raingardennetwork.com

Watershed Protection

www.cwp.org

Riverwatch

www.in.gov/dnr/riverwatch

Drain Marking

www.in.gov/dnr/stormdrain

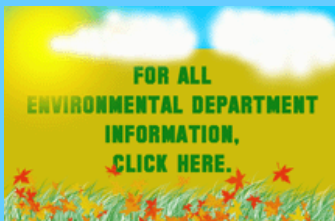
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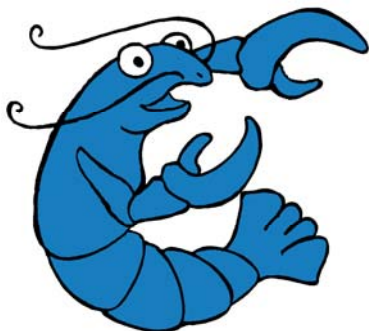
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**Visit us on the
web at:**

www.nirpc.org



**Click on the image
above at NIRPC's
website to learn
more about MS4 in
your community!**



Upcoming Events & Opportunities

April 6, 9:00-12:30pm. 7th Annual Soil & Septic Workshop
Pinney Purdue Ag Center, Wanatah. To register contact Sandy DeVault, 765-494-8073 or sdevault@purdue.edu. Cost: \$20 if paid by March 28, \$40 on day of event..

April 22, 10:00- 4:00 pm. Northwest Indiana Earth Day, Sunset Hill Farm County Park, Valparaiso. The MS4 Community Partnership will have a booth at this event. Please contact Mary Beth Wiseman, 219-763-6060 or mwiseman@nirpc.org for more information or to volunteer to assist at this event.

April 28, 9:00– Noon. Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Cedar Lake Town Hall, 7408 Constitution Ave.
This event is part of the MS4 Community Partnership Program. Citizens are invited to volunteer to assist at this event. Please contact Mary Beth Wiseman for more information or to volunteer.

May 11, 9:00– Noon. Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Gas Can Exchange, IUN Gary, 3400 Broadway.
This event is part of the MS4 Community Partnership Program. Citizens are invited to volunteer to assist at this event. Please contact Mary Beth Wiseman for more information or to volunteer.

May 22, 9:30– noon. Rain Garden Training and Field Installation Workshop, Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center, Porter. To register or for more information please contact Mary Beth Wiseman. This workshop is **FREE**.

The MS4 Community Partnership:

George van Til – Lake County Surveyor, Kevin Breitzke – Porter County Surveyor, Cedar Lake, Crown Point, Dyer, East Chicago, Gary, Griffith, Highland, Hobart, Lake Station, Merrillville, Munster, New Chicago, Schererville, St. John, Chesterton, Portage, Porter, Valparaiso, Nature Works Conservation District, Twin Creeks Conservation District, Valparaiso Lakes Area Conservation District.

The **Stormwater Matters** newsletter is published by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission's (NIRPC) Environmental Department as part of the Northwest Indiana MS4 Community outreach program. In addition to providing valuable information to regional MS4 communities, the newsletter provides information to stakeholders on other water efforts, projects, and issues that impact the Region's waterways. This newsletter is published at least quarterly; articles may be submitted to NIRPC's MS4 Community Partnership Coordinator, Mary Beth Wiseman, mwiseman@nirpc.org.

Remember, Only Rain in the Drain!